

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 3, 2014  
SLADE BUILDING**

**Members present:** Michael Stauder, Chair  
Daniel Galante, Vice Chair  
Jeffrey Williams, Clerk  
Raeanne Siegel  
David Simmerer

**Staff present:** Anita Scheipers, Town Administrator; Amy DeLaRoche, Accountant; Kristen Noel, Treasurer

**Others present:** Paul Hale, Jim Berthiaume, Ed Blanchard, Kellianne Becker, Danielle Arakelian, Tom Bratko, June Lindsten

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm

**Open Session:**

Paul Hale came in on behalf of the Lions Club of Hubbardston. He stated some ruts were created at Mt. Jefferson Conservation Area hayfields due to the excessive rain that fell days before the Hubbardston Haunted Hayride. Some cars also got stuck in the mud in the parking lot. The Lions Club closed the event down an hour earlier than planned for safety reasons. He stated the ruts will be corrected as of tomorrow. Mr. Stauder thanked Mr. Hale and the Lions Club for the event.

**Town Administrator Report- see attached**

Ms. Scheipers also reported on her meeting in the Holden office with Steve Bonavita regarding the USDA Rural Assistance Program. She stated the town is not eligible for the program grants because the median household income for Hubbardston is above the federal census limit by about \$300.00. However, the town is eligible for loan programs. The interest rate is a little higher than that of a municipal bond. It does allow for a maximum term of forty years for large construction projects. The only item not covered is the preliminary study indicating the need for a project.

Ms. Scheipers presented a condolence letter on behalf of the Selectboard to be sent to the Town of Sterling due to the unexpected sudden death of Town Administrator Jeff Ritter.

Ms. Scheipers presented the LA- 5 form, necessary for setting the tax rate, for signatures.

**Motion: D. Galante**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Williams**

**To sign the LA-5 form**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Scheipers presented the Massachusetts Cultural Council agreement for fiscal year funding of \$4,300.00

**Motion: D. Galante**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Williams**

**To authorize the Chair to sign the agreement**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Scheipers reported there is some funding available in insurance proceeds under \$20,000 account for replacing some of the Slade Building windows. She stated we are placing extra plastic on some of the other windows to reduce drafts. She requested the Board fund \$6,000 to \$8,000 to replace some of the windows.

**Motion: J. Williams** **2<sup>nd</sup>: D. Galante**  
**To authorize up to \$8,000 to replace windows in the Slade Building** **Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Scheipers presented a certificate of appreciation for Police Officer Scott Tibert for eleven years of outstanding service. Officer Tibert is resigning effective November 13<sup>th</sup>. The Board signed the certificate.

### Resignations

Ms. Scheipers presented a letter of resignation from Cindy Nordstrom from the Cultural Council, effective October 20, 2014 and a letter of resignation from Officer Tibert effective November 13, 2014.

**Motion: D. Galante** **2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Williams**  
**To accept both resignations as presented** **Vote: All in Favor**

### Appointments

**Motion: D. Galante** **2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Williams**  
**To appoint William Rigerio to Cultural Council with a term to expire June 30, 2015 and Elizabeth Estabrook as Election worker with a term expiring June 30, 2015**  
**Vote: All in Favor**

### Minutes Approval

**Motion: D. Galante** **2<sup>nd</sup>: R. Siegel**  
**To approve the minutes of October 20, 2014 as presented**  
**Vote: All in Favor, except for Mr. Williams who abstained**

### Draft Auto Dealer License Application

**Motion: D. Galante** **2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Williams**  
**To approve the auto dealer license application form as presented** **Vote: All in Favor**

### Accountant/Treasurer Presentation

Town Accountant Amy DeLaRoche and Treasurer/Acting Tax Collector Kristen Noel presented an update on town finance reporting. With the new software program, SoftRight, they have been working together over the past year on improving cash reconciliation, receivables reconciliation, overlay reconciliation, withholding reconciliation, etc. Also, there are now some departments (Police & Fire) entering in their own expenditures into SoftRight. They have the ability to generate reports also.

Ms. Noel reported treasury receipt codes had to be created for each revenue account. Ms. DeLaRoche stated she uses a trail analysis report so cash can be reconciled every month. Receipts, warrants, and journal entries are compared by the accountant and treasurer at month's

end using the general ledger to cashbook reconciliation form. All reports are time stamped and signed in SoftRight. Ms. DeLaRoche stated there was only a discrepancy of \$25.06 for the end of fiscal year 2014. Ms. DeLaRoche stated she can now provide overlay reconciliation for the Assessors' office. Another new item is withholding reconciliation for payroll deductions. Ms. DeLaRoche moved on to the CPA Fund. She and Ms. Noel backtracked and recreated the CPA Fund reports. They had not been separated originally but are now correct and provide detail on each category. This will reconcile balances and provide customized reporting for the CPA committee.

Another new item is a combined balance sheet. This detail balance sheet provides all assets and liabilities along with fund balances. This provides easy tracking for funds due from the Commonwealth of MA and organized detail for the Department of Revenue.

Another improvement is SoftRight is upgrading the town to auto-populated receivables reconciliation which pulls data from the accountant's trial balances and includes manually entered tax collector's receivables into a month to end report.

Ms. Noel reported on trust fund reconciliation. Bartholomew & Co. of Worcester, MA, who manages town trust funds, will be coming in and providing all transactions since 2007.

SoftRight will be customized for all the trust fund information by individual account numbers. Interest will be divided out by each trust fund rather than being all clumped together. Trust expenditure and revenue accounts will now be tied together.

Warrant treasury amounts are now printed rather than hand written. It will also include wire transfers which in the past were not included. Standard and custom reports for committees and departments for vendors, selective sort function are now available. Daily instant crossover reports between the treasurer and accountant offices are available. Forecasting abilities are also available. Ms. DeLaRoche reported the statement of indebtedness, the balance sheet and check lists are almost completed. Schedule A should be completed by next week. They should be closing FY'14 shortly, seven months earlier than last year. Mr. Stauder stated it looked like the investment in the new software was worth it. Ms. DeLaRoche agreed.

Ms. Scheipers noted that the tax collector office was using an old DOS based program called Point which did not have a lot of the checks and balances like SoftRight. She pointed out it would be advantageous to purchase the tax collector module so that it can be tied into the other two modules. This would provide accountability and better checks and balances.

The Board thanked Ms. DeLaRoche and Ms. Noel. They exited the meeting.

### **Class II Auto Dealer License Application- 26 Gardner Road**

Ms. Scheipers introduced Kellianne Becker who is applying for a Class II auto dealer license for 26 Gardner Road. The name of the business is D and D Powersports, LLC.

Ms. Becker stated she and co-owner David Iacaboni would like to sell high end cars. The property owner has high end cars he would like to market, most sales would be online. They would like to start off small and see where it goes. Ms. Scheipers requested a signed version of the rental agreement. She stated there is still a question on whether the Planning Board needs to approve the change of use for the property. The Selectboard has a couple of options such as approving the license conditional on Planning Board approval or other determination. They can also revisit once the Planning Board makes a determination.

Ms. Scheipers stated there is some concern about the alarm system in the building. She is not sure where that stands. Ms. Becker stated Fire Chief Hayes will have to advise them on the system requirements.

Mr. Stauder asked how the auto dealer business would work with the other business, Go Green. Ms. Becker stated a realty trust owns the building; the auto dealer will be renting part of the building from them. She indicated the plot plan showing where the offices and parking would be located as well as a garage for storage of some of the vehicles. Go Green would still be active. Ms. Scheipers asked if the license would start now or in January 2015 as there is no fee pro rating policy. If the license is granted, it would expire December 31, 2014 and a renewal would be needed for January 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Selectboard preferred to have the Planning Board review the application before making a decision.

**Motion: D. Galante**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Williams**

**To delay decision of license pending Planning Board review**

**Vote: All in Favor**

Ms. Scheipers advised Ms. Becker to check with the Fire Chief on the alarm system in the meantime. Ms. Becker agreed to follow up and thanked the Board before exiting.

**Public Question Period**

Ms. Arakelian asked about break-ins into houses and cars in town. Does the Board know anything about this? The Board did not know but advised contacting the department directly rather than calling Rutland Dispatch. Discussion ensued about open hours for Police Department.

Mr. Blanchard asked if the town was going to have a new tax collector. Ms. Scheipers stated yes, Kori Stuart would be starting in the position in late November/early December.

The Board announced it would be going into Executive Session. Those attending exited the meeting.

**Motion: D. Galante**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Williams**

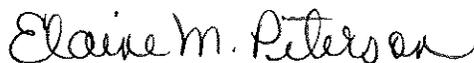
**To enter Executive Session for reason #2- to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct contract negotiations with non- union personnel and to adjourn upon exiting**

**Vote: Ms. Siegel- yes, Mr. Simmerer- yes, Mr. Williams -yes, Mr. Galante- yes, Mr. Stauder- yes**

\*\*\*\*\*Executive Session Minutes Are Separate\*\*\*\*\*

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine M. Peterson  
Town Secretary

Approved: December 1, 2014

**To: Hubbardston Board of Selectmen**

**From: Anita Scheipers, Town Administrator**

**Date: November 3, 2014**

**Re: Bi-weekly Town Administrator Report**

The following is a summary of key issues handled during the past weeks:

- 1. Slade Building Insulation:** In our second round of bid solicitations, we received two bids for the insulation project. The responsive and responsible low bidder for the project is Energia LLC from Holyoke MA for the amount of \$39,707. The firm had excellent references from other municipalities for similar work. I am working with Energia to execute the contract and to define the best start date for the work. By the contract, all work must be completed by Dec 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 2. Facilities Management Update:** Since the implementation of a work order system, the DPW has been working to take on the routine building maintenance and minor repairs. Tim Kilhart and I will be establishing "House Doctor" contracts to create contracted relationships with electricians, plumbers, and carpenters to assist with those building repairs that require licensed professionals. These contracts will ensure we get qualified vendors to respond quickly as needed - while still meeting all state mandates for procurement of these services. These not-to-exceed value house doctor contracts also allow a community to achieve lower rates for such services by contracting for 1 year or more, rather than be charged a standard small job rate. We hope to have these contracts in place by early 2015.
- 3. Risk Management Committee:** We held had the first meeting of the Risk Management Committee on Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>. This committee, comprised of various department heads, will work to identify and remediate deficiencies in all areas of potential loss (building conditions, work safety, fiscal practices, etc.) With the help of MIIA's Bob Marinelli, the committee is first working on identifying appropriate goals for this first year. These goals will likely include items such as achieving loss control credits through staff training and policy improvements. Any feedback from the Board would be appreciated as this committee begins to outlines its objectives.
- 4. Personnel Activity:** In these past weeks we have been accepting applications for two clerical positions: a) Police Clerk and b) Land Use Clerk (Building and Planning). We received numerous applications for each position and will be interviewing the top candidates for each position over the next week.
- 5. Country Hen Scholarship Money:** I have been working with Mike Sencer of Hidden Valley Ranch in CA (the company that took over the Country Hen). You may recall Mr. George Bass donated \$15,000 to establish a scholarship for local students, and the Country Hen made a matching donation. Mr. Sencer was anxious to find out the status of our \$30,000 investments and our scholarship program. I explained that we currently have these funds invested in the most aggressive type of account allowed; but that account yields only 2.39% interest. Our account has earned only \$317.44 in interest, and thus has not earned enough interest income to allow us to award a scholarship in 2015. Mr. Sencer stated that Country Hen like to donate additional monies to the Town, but only if higher yields can be achieved. I explained to Mr. Sencer that cities and towns are limited by state law as to the types of investment accounts in which we are allowed to invest trust funds. Mr. Sencer stated that if Country Hen did move to donate additional monies for a scholarship, it might be best to have those funds retained in their own accounts which yield higher rates. The only problem with this is that the parent company, Hidden Valley Ranch, requires any scholarship be a financial need-based program, rather than scholastic-merit based as our policy defines. I suggested we could have both programs moving forward. The Town can continue to grow the existing trust fund to award scholastic-merit based programs (as soon as interest income allows), and the second Country Hen program can be directed toward local students with financial need. I told Mr. Sencer I would review this option with you and get back to him with your comments.

## Meeting w USDA – Rural Assistance (Steve Bonavita) /Holden

Oct 9, 2014

### Discussion Points:

1. Loans do not count against our debt limits
2. Max term is 40 years (can do less) to greatly minimize annual cost to town (and tax payers), and ensures all users over useful life of building are helping to pay for building.
3. Construction loan (short term bond) counts against the 40 year term
4. Interest typically a tad higher than 20 year bonds
5. No \$ limit
6. No credit rating required/no fee application
7. They loan for almost any project imaginable
8. \$ can be used for all soft and hard costs of project – even demo of old buildings, and paving of areas after demo (which he encourages)
9. Once loan approved, they “hold” money at no cost until actually needed. Will release partial amounts if project ends up getting phased
10. Two step process: a) pre-application stating Hubbardston is interested in getting a loan (few details needed) , and then b) formal application which SB will assist us in completing
11. SB advises that we apply even if we are “thinking” about needing funds – once we decide what scope of project might be
12. Other communities recent loans:
  - a. Paxton P/F Station funded through RA Loan - \$2M.
  - b. Rutland Library
  - c. Oakham
  - d. Millbury
13. Based on his experience, SB states typical costs are \$1M per “use”; Sr. Center = \$1M, Town Offices = \$1M, and combined P/F = \$2M.
14. SB advocates for combined facilities to reduce construction and operating costs
15. Water and Sewer: SB states that Hubbardston is ready, we should definitely be grant-eligible to help reduce costs (25% of project costs). He strongly suggests we do this as a District System, so that only users are paying for cost of system.